

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of securing access to a network (13), the network (13) including at least one first electronic device (18) and at least one access point (20),
5 from a user (16) having a second electronic device (12), said method comprising the steps of:

transmitting a radio frequency (RF) signal (48) from the first electronic device (18);

- 10 detecting the RF signal (48) from the first electronic device (18) with the access point (20);

transmitting a radio frequency (RF) signal (50) from the second electronic device (12);

detecting the RF signal (50) from the second electronic device (12) with the same access point (20);

- 15 said method characterized by enabling the first electronic device (18) to allow the user (16) having the second electronic device (12) to access the network (13) and the first electronic device (18) in response to the access point (20) detecting the RF signals (48, 50) from both the first (18) and the second electronic devices (12).

- 20 2. A method as set forth in claim 1 further including the steps of measuring a signal strength for the RF signal (48, 50) from both the first (18) and the second electronic devices (12), comparing the signal (48, 50) strengths to a predetermined threshold, and enabling the first electronic device (18) in response to both of the signal strengths being above the predetermined threshold.

3. A method as set forth in claim 2 further including the step of disabling the first electronic device (18) in response to either one of the signal (48, 50) strengths from the first electronic device (18) and the second electronic devices (12) being measured below the predetermined threshold by the access point (20).

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4. A method as set forth in claim 2 further including the step of transmitting data from either one of the first (18) and the second electronic devices (12) to the access point (20) and routing data from the access point (20) to the other electronic device.

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5. A method as set forth in claim 2 further including the step of activating either one of the first (18) and the second electronic device (12) to transmit the data directly to the other in response to instructions from the access point (20) thereby bypassing the access point (20).

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6. A method as set forth in claim 5 wherein the step of activating either one is further defined as transmitting timing intervals from the access point (20) to either one of the first (18) and the second electronic devices (12) and activating the one during the timing intervals to detect the other.

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7. A method as set forth in claim 3 further including the steps of detecting the RF signals (48, 50) from the first (18) and the second electronic devices (12) by a different access point (20), measuring the RF signal (48, 50) strengths at the different access point (20), and re-enabling the first electronic device (18) in response to the RF

signals (48, 50) from the first (18) and the second electronic device (12) being above the predetermined threshold.

8. A method as set forth in claim 7 further including the step of loading
5 user data into each of the access points (20) in response to at least one access point (20) measuring the RF signal (50) from the second electronic device (12) as being above the predetermined threshold.

9. A method as set forth in claim 8 further including the step of
10 synchronizing the user data from the different access points (20) to the first electronic device (18) in response the RF signal (50) from the second electronic device (12) being above the predetermined threshold at the different access point (20).

10. A method of securing access to a network (13), the network (13)
15 including at least one first electronic device (18) and at least one access point (20), from a user (16) having a second electronic device (12), said method comprising the steps of:

transmitting a radio frequency (RF) signal (50) from the second
electronic device (12) to establish communication with at least one access point (20);

20 detecting the RF signal (50) from the second electronic device (12)
with a first (21) and a second access points (23);

measuring the strength of the RF signal (50) from the second electronic
device (12) at the first and second access points (21, 23);

comparing a maximum measured RF signal (50) strength by either of the first and second access points (21, 23) to a predetermined threshold;

enabling a predetermined number of first electronic devices (18) in response to the detected RF signal (50) strength being above the predetermined threshold;

said method characterized by transmitting data from the second device through the access point (20) which measures the maximum RF signal (50) strength, to the predetermined number of first electronic devices (18) thereby establishing communication between the first electronic devices (18) and the second electronic device (12).

11. A method as set forth in claim 10 further including the step of loading user data into the first and the second access points (21, 23) in response to the RF signal (50) from the second electronic device (12) being above the predetermined threshold at either of the first and the second access points (21,23).

12. A method as set forth in claim 11 further including the step of transferring communication to one of the first and second access points (21, 23) in response to the RF signal (50) strength at the other access point falling below the predetermined threshold.

13. A method as set forth in claim 12 further including the step of disabling the first electronic devices (18) in response to the RF signal (50) strength from the second electronic device (12) being measured below the predetermined threshold at both the first and second access points (21, 23).

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14. A method as set forth in claim 13 further including the step of removing the user data from the first and the second access points (21, 23) in response to the RF signal (50) strength falling below the predetermined threshold at the first and second access points (21, 23).

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